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Conference Abstract

Innovative integrated health care models in Germany

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Abstract

Purpose: To identify successful implementation strategies for regional integrated health care models in Germany.

Context: In Germany, an imminent GP workforce shortage, especially in rural areas, threatens the sustainable provision of primary care services. Initiatives to reorganise care have been launched on the regional level, as well as local support programmes to attract young GPs. A recent health care reform stipulated the right for federal states to participate in regional planning of ambulatory health care. As part of the research project "Innovative Health Care Models", we identified strategies and success factors of regional initiatives, with a particular focus on integrated care.

State of the art: Successful models were initiated by local GP networks, regional district administrators, district councils, or local mayors. Success factors included good working relationships of local health care actors and sufficient start-up financing. Transfer of strategies to other regions seemed possible.

Statements for debate:

1. Are strategies initiated by regional health authorities are better able to support integration than models initiated by GPs and GP networks (top-down vs. bottom-up)?
2. How can good cooperation and personal contacts between all participants be facilitated?
3. Which incentives (financial and otherwise) are needed to support local initiatives to integrate care?

Keywords:

primary care, health care models, integrated care, health services research

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